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PETER-KROAK



Louis
Moe



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Louis Moe

PETER-KROAK

The largest green frog in the pond

By Louis Moe

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Once upon a time there was a pond in the middle of a green meadow. A diving board of long green reeds was built right out into the middle of the pond. Here on this diving board Peter Kroak, the largest green frog in the pond, gave swimming lessons to all the little pond people on Monday mornings and Wednesday afternoons.

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Louis Moe



When Peter Kroak was not giving swimming lessons to the little pond people, he went on long leaps through the woods and fields.

One day he leaped long leaps to the top of a hill on the opposite side of the meadow. There before him sat seven mice!

Peter Kroak never knew what mischief they were plotting. But it *was* mischief, for the seven mice were robber mice. They lived in the woods and stole from their hard-working neighbors.

The moment the mice saw Peter Kroak, they were afraid he had overheard them squeaking their secret plans to rob a pantry.





So each mouse grasped his sharp knife and dashed toward Peter. But Peter leaped long leaps down the hill. He leaped as fast as he could, with the robber mice close behind him.

Finally Peter took an unusually long leap, and landed with a splash in the big pond.

Peter was more at home in the water than he was on land, for was he not swimming teacher of all the little pond people?

So Peter Kroak swam out in the pond and laughed at the robber mice as they stood on the beach, waving their knives and squeaking in anger.





Peter swam across the pond, laughing to himself.

“That’s what comes of being such a fine swimmer,” Peter croaked to himself. “I can fool all the robber mice in the woods!”

Peter was so proud of his swimming that he completely forgot that only three robber mice had chased him down the hill — and he never gave the other four robber mice a thought!

These four mice had scurried through the woods and fields to the other side of the pond.

So when Peter came swimming to the bank, there they were, hidden behind a rock.

Before Peter could croak for help, he was tied with rope and led away by the robber mice.



Sow's
Moe



But two bright eyes saw Peter's capture, the eyes of Reddy the Fox.

"I must help poor Peter Kroak," he thought to himself. "He is always kind to the pond people. He teaches them to swim on Monday mornings and Wednesday afternoons. What would they all do without their swimming teacher?"

So Reddy the Fox crept through the tall grass. His keen ears heard the grass rustle as the four robber mice led Peter away.

Reddy took a short cut that only he knew about. Suddenly he pounced in their path.

The robber mice dropped the ropes that bound Peter and ran away, just as fast as they could.



Louis Moe



As the mice ran, two long ears and two bright eyes appeared in the tall grass directly in front of Peter. A rabbit sat up before him.

“Quick, Peter, get on my back,” he said. “I’ll take you back to your friends. But why, Peter, do you have to go on such long leaps through the woods and fields? You ought to stay in the pond.”

Peter Kroak said nothing, but leaped on the rabbit’s back.

And away they went, through the tall grass and buttercups, leaving the robber mice to squeak their anger and disappointment.



Louis
MOE



The news of Peter's capture spread to Frogville, Peter's home.

So when Peter got home on the rabbit's back, he found a group of his friends standing in the very middle of Frogville.

Peter quickly leaped on a stump. "To arms," he croaked. "Away with the robber mice! We must have the freedom of the fields and pond forever! We Frogs shall fight for freedom."

So all the Frogs quickly put on their uniforms and fastened green cat-tails in their helmets, the symbol of a free pond for all pond people, for all time.

The rumor of the Frog advance spread to all parts of the pond.



LOUIS. W. RAE



The robber mice and all their wives and children fled to a forest, far, far away from the pond.

So when the Frog army reached the valley of the robber mice, not one mouse was in sight! The Frog army was victorious — and Peter was decorated with a hero's crown.

Back the victorious Frog army hurried to Frogville, leaping long leaps.

Mrs. Peter Kroak had been up since sunrise washing and scrubbing all the little Kroaks. So when Peter came up the front walk, they were all there to meet him.

Any summer evening, near almost any big pond, the children of Peter Kroak can be heard croaking, always croaking their Battle Cry of Freedom.



Louis Moë

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